

Message Text

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APPROVED BY: S/S:JPMOFFAT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT ATHENS 4044 ACTION SECSTATE 2 JUNE.

QUOTE

S E C R E T ATHENS 4044

NODIS

DEPT REPEAT TO SECRETARY AND TO ANKARA

AND NICOSIA AS DESIRED

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR GR TU CY

SUBJECT: CARAMANLIS-DEMIREL MEETING IN BRUSSELS - BRIEFING
BY BITSIOS

REF: A. BRUSSELS 4876

B. ATHENS 4012

C. SECTO 2065

D. SECTO 2069

E. SECTO 2070

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1. ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS, FORMIN
BITSIOS MET PRIVATELY WITH ME THIS MORNING AND
BRIEFED ME ON CARAMANLIS' LONG MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER
DEMIREL IN BRUSSELS ON SAT, MAY 31.

2. BITSIOS BEGAN BY COMMENTING BRIEFLY ON CARAMANLIS MEETING WITH PRES. FORD AND THE SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATIONS HE AND CARAMANLIS HAD WITH THE SECRETARY. HIS COMMENTS WERE CONSISTENT WITH REFTELS. HE SAID THAT THE BRUSSELS MEETINGS HAD BEEN A PERSONAL SUCCESS FOR CARAMANLIS, WHO HAD BEEN REPEATEDLY COMPLIMENTED BY THOSE PRESENT. HE SAID THAT THEY HAD ALSO BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN WIDE UNDERSTANDING FOR GREECE'S POSITIONS ON CYPRUS, GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS, AND WITH RESPECT TO NATO. BITSIOS SAID THAT AS A RESULT OF THEIR TALKS IN BRUSSELS, HE AND CARAMANLIS ARE FULLY "SATISFIED THAT US INFLUENCE HAS BEEN EXERTED" IN ANKARA IN THE "RIGHT DIRECTION" AND THEY FEEL THAT THE SECRETARY AND THE USG HAVE BEEN DOING "A GOOD JOB" IN ANKARA. BITSIOS SAID THAT HE AND CARAMANLIS HAD HEARD DIRECTLY FROM THE TURKS ABOUT THE WAY THE SECRETARY HAS BEEN PUTTING PRESSURE ON THE TURKS AND TRYING TO MOVE THEM TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT ON CYPRUS AND OF THEIR DIFFERENCES WITH THE GREEKS.

3. AS FOR THE CARAMANLIS-DEMIREL MEETING, BITSIOS SAID THAT THE ADVANCE ARRANGEMENTS HAD ENVISAGED A SHORT MEETING CONFINED TO GENERAL DISCUSSION SO AS TO INSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO "QUARREL" BETWEEN THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS. HOWEVER, THE TWO PM'S HAD MET PRIVATELY FOR ALMOST THREE HOURS WITH ONLY AN INTERPRETOR PRESENT (AN OFFICER IN THE GREEK EMBASSY IN ANKARA WHO SPEAKS "PERFECT TURKISH"). THE TWO PM'S HAD A LONG DISCUSSION OF CYPRUS AND A GENERAL REVIEW OF BILATERAL PROBLEMS. BITSIOS SAID THAT CARAMANLIS WANTED TO CONVEY THE FOLLOWING PERSONAL MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT FORD AND TO SECRETARY KISSINGER, AS HIS GENERAL OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE MEETING: "WE SUCCEEDED IN CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF DETENTE BUT THERE WERE NO CONCRETE RESULTS FROM OUR MEETING". TOWARD THE END OF THEIR MEETING, IN AN EFFORT TO GET SOME KIND OF SPECIFIC COMMENTS OUT OF DEMIREL, CARAMANLIS HAD SAID TO HIM: "TELL ME IN CONFIDENCE WHAT YOU THINK YOU CAN DO (I.E., WITH RESPECT TO CYPRUS) AND I WILL NOT TELL ANYONE. HOW DO YOU REALLY FEEL, HOW FAR DO YOU THINK YOU CAN
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GO TO REACH A SETTLEMENT? IF YOU WANT ME TO, WHEN I LEAVE THIS ROOM I WILL FORGET WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD ME, BUT I NEED TO HAVE SOME IDEA NOW ABOUT WHAT IS POSSIBLE."
ACCORDING TO CARAMANLIS, THE RESULTS OF THIS APPROACH TO DEMIREL WERE "ABSOLUTELY NEGATIVE". THEREFORE, BITSIOS SAID, CARAMANLIS WANTS THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY TO "KEEP THE PRESSURE ON ANKARA BECAUSE ATMOSPHERICS ARE ONLY TEMPORARY AND CAN CHANGE".

4. BITSIOS SAID THAT CARAMANLIS HAD TOLD HIM THAT HE (CARAMANLIS) HAD "KEPT THE INITIATIVE" DURING HIS MEETING WITH DEMIREL AND THAT CARAMANLIS HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT DEMIREL WAS UNEASY AND "EMBARRASSED" THROUGHOUT THEIR MEETING.

5. DEMIREL HAD TOLD CARAMANLIS THAT HE "NEEDED TIME" TO BRING TURKISH PUBLIC OPINION AROUND TO A SETTLEMENT ON CYPRUS. CARAMANLIS HAD VIGOROUSLY CRITICIZED THE TURKISH GOVT FOR ITS ACTION OF LAST AUGUST DURING THE EARLY, FRAGILE DAYS OF THE NEW CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT. CARAMANLIS HAD SAID HE COULD NOT ACCEPT THAT THE TURKS HAD ACTED IN RETALIATION AGAINST THE GREEK "COLONELS", BECAUSE THEY WERE ALREADY OUT OF POWER, AND THE NET EFFECT OF THE TURKISH ACTIONS IN AUGUST WAS A VIRTUAL ASSASSINATION OF THE NEW CARAMANLIS GOVT. ALSO, CARAMANLIS HAD TOLD DEMIREL, THE TURKS HAD GONE WAY TOO FAR (BY OCCUPYING ALMOST 40 PERCENT OF THE ISLAND) AND HAD THUS CREATED PROBLEMS FOR THEMSELVES IN TRYING TO DRAW BACK NOW TO A MORE REASONABLE ZONE. ACCORDING TO BITSIOS, DEMIREL HAD EXPLAINED THE DIFFICULTIES FACING HIM -- WITH HIS OWN COALITION GOVERNMENT, AND VIS-A-VIS THE TURKISH MILITARY AND THE OPPOSITION (ECEVIT). DEMIREL HAD STRESSED THAT HE NEEDED "TIME" TO TRY AND WORK THINGS OUT.

6. BITSIOS SAID THAT CARAMANLIS WANTED THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY TO KNOW THAT HE WAS GOING TO GIVE "A FAIR AMOUNT OF TIME" TO DEMIREL BEFORE UNDERTAKING ANY NEW INITIATIVES. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, BITSIOS SAID, "A FEW WEEKS", ALTHOUGH HE SAID CARAMANLIS HAD DECIDED AGAINST SETTING ANY SPECIFIC DEADLINE. IF HE DOES NOT SEE ANY REAL MOVEMENT DURING THESE NEXT FEW WEEKS, CARAMANLIS INTENDS TO HAVE BITSIOS CONSULT WITH THE SECRETARY ABOUT WHAT SHOULD
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BE DONE NEXT.

7. CARAMANLIS ALSO WANTED TRANSMITTED TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY HIS VIEW THAT THEY "SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL ABOUT RESUMING MILITARY ASSISTANCE" TO TURKEY. CARAMANLIS FEARED THAT IF THE TURKS "GET WHAT THEY WANT, THEY WILL REVERT TO THEIR PREVIOUSFANATICAL POSITIONS". CARAMANLIS ALSO IS CONCERNED LESS THE NEW BREEZES OF DETENTE FLOWING OUT OF ANKARA ARE MERELY INTENDED "TO TRY AND INFLUENCE THE US CONGRESS". I ASKED BITSIOS IF I HAD UNDERSTOOD HIM CORRECTLY AND IF HE WANTED ME TO CONVEY THIS MESSAGE ABOUT US AID TO TURKEY IN JUST THOSE TERMS. BITSIOS WEIGHED HIS WORDS VERY CAREFULLY AND SAID THAT OF COURSE--AS CARAMANLIS HAD POINTED OUT IN BRUSSELS -- THE QUESTION OF US AID TO TURKEY WAS "AN INTERNAL MATTER" AND ENTIRELY FOR THE USG TO DECIDE. CARAMANLIS HAS TAKEN THE POSITION THAT IT IS NOT UP TO HIM AND THE GOG TO TELL US AUTHORITIES OR MEMBERS OF THE SS CONGRESS WHAT THEY SHOULD DO ABOUT THIS MATTER. HOWEVER, BITSIOS WENT ON, "WE ARE NATURALLY NOT INDIFFERENT" ABOUT WHAT THE US DOES BECAUSE "FOR THE GREEKS, IT IS A MATTER OF WAR OR PEACE WITH TURKEY". BITSIOS SAID THAT CARAMANLIS FEELS THERE HAVE BEEN SOME "GOOD DEVELOPMENTS" RECENTLY WITH RESPECT TO GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS AND THAT THE US HAS HELPED IN TWO WAYS: FIRST, BY "EXERTING INFLUENCE"

IN ANKARA, AND SECOND, BY "CUTTING OFF" AID TO TURKEY. HOWEVER, BITSIOS QUICKLY ADDED, CARAMANLIS HAD ORDERED THAT SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS BE SENT TO GREEK AMBASSADOR IN WASHDC AND THRU HIM TO GREEK OFFICIALS IN THE US THAT THEY ADOPT AN "ABSOLUTELY NEUTRAL" POSITION ON THIS MATTER IN THEIR CONTACTS THERE. INDEED, BITSIOS ADDED, SOME "CYPRUS AND GREEK SUPPORTERS" IN THE US HAD BEEN COMPLAINING THAT THIS POLICY WAS "UNDERCUTTING" THEIR OWN EFFORTS WITH THE CONGRESS.

8. BITSIOS INDICATED THAT WAS ALL HE HAD TO TELL ME, AND I ASKED WHETHER CARAMANLIS AND DEMIREL HAD NOT TALKED MORE ABOUT BILATERAL GREEK-TURKISH PROBLEMS. BITSIOS SAID THAT "WE MUST SETTLE THESE BILATERAL MATTERS BY OURSELVES". HOWEVER, HE WENT ON, HE COULD TELL ME THAT CARAMANLIS AND DEMIREL HAD AGREED TO SET UP SOME BILATERAL "EXPERTS COMMITTEES" TO MEET ALTERNATELY IN ANKARA AND ATHENS. HE SAID THE FIRST SUCH COMMITTEE WOULD DEAL WITH "AIR SPACE PROBLEMS" AND WOULD
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MEET IN ANKARA BEGINNING JUNE 16TH. A SECOND COMMITTEE HAD BEEN DESIGNATED TO DEAL WITH THE FAMOUS "COMPROMIS" TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE WORLD COURT CONCERNING THE AEGEAN DISPUTE. THE PROBLEM HERE WAS THAT THE PRINCIPAL TURKISH "EXPERT" (THE TURKISH AMBASSADOR IN GENEVA -- BILCAY, I BELIEVE HIS NAME IS) HAS SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT BE READY TO MEET WITH THE GREEK EXPERTS "UNTIL SEPTEMBER". CAGLAYANGIL, IN FRONT OF BITSIOS, HAD ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS THAT THE TURKISH SIDE SHOULD "SPEED UP" IT PREPARATIONS. IN THE MEANTIME, BITSIOS SAID, THE TURKS WANTED TO PROCEED WITH "JOINT VENTURES" FOR EXPLORATIONS OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF IN THE AEGEAN. BITSIOS SAID THIS WOULD REQUIRE FURTHER CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION: "THEY WANT 50-50 PARTICIPATION IN THESE EXPLORATIONS, BUT 50PC OF WHAT? THEIR PROPERTY? OUR PROPERTY?, OR JUST WHAT?"

9. BITSIOS SAID THAT DEMIREL HAD RAISED THE QUESTION OF GREECE'S FORTIFICATION OF ISLANDS IN THE AEGEAN, AND CARAMANLIS HAD EXPLAINED AT LENGTH THAT THE GREEKS HAD DONE THIS "MERELY FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES" IN THE FACE OF PROVOCATIONS AND THREATS FROM ANKARA. CARAMANLIS HAD TOLD DEMIREL THAT THE ISLANDS WOULD ONCE AGAIN BE DEMILITARIZED WHEN THERE WAS A TRUE PEACE BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY AND THE ISLAND WERE NOT BEING THREATENED. "DON'T ASK ME TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE ISLANDS NOW", CARAMANLIS HAD TOLD DEMIREL, AND DEMIREL DID NOT OBJECT. (DEMIREL'S FAILURE TO OBJECT SEEMED TO WORRY BITSIOS A LITTLE--FOR OBVIOUS REASONS.)

10. AS FOR THE "MINORITIES QUESTION", BITSIOS SAID, THE TURKS WERE ON SUCH WEAK GROUND THAT THEY DID NOT PRESS THE MATTER WHILE IN BRUSSELS.

11. IN CLOSING OUR CONVERSATION, BITSIOS SAID THAT DEMIREL AND THE TURKS HAD REPEATEDLY MADE CLEAR TO CARAMANLIS AND THE

GREEKS THAT CYPRUS WAS THE MAIN PROBLEM FROM THE TURKISH POINT OF VIEW. BITSIOS SAID THAT SOME OF THE DISCUSSION ABOUT CYPRUS IN BRUSSELS SEEMED TO FOCUS ON THE QUESTION OF PERCENTAGE OF TERRITORY TO BE IN EACH OF TWO ZONES ON THE ISLAND. HE SAID THAT FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN HAD TOLD HIM THAT THE BRITISH WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK VERY CLOSELY WITH THE US IN TRYING TO HELP BRING ABOUT A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT AND CALLAGHAN HAD ASKED BITSIOS WHAT PERCENTAGE OF TERRITORY
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THE GREEKS COULD ACCEPT. BITSIOS SAID HE HAD REFUSED TO NAME ANY FIGURE, FIRST, BECAUSE HE WAS NOT A CYPRIOT AND THE QUALITY OF THE TERRITORY WAS IN SOME WAYS AS IMPORTANT, OR MORE IMPORTANT, THAN THE AMOUNT, AND SECOND, BECAUSE IF THE TURKS ONCE HAD A FIGURE FROM THE GREEKS, THEY WOULD TAKE THAT AS AN OPENING NEGOTIATING POSITION AND BARGAIN HARD FROM THERE.

12. AS WE WERE WALKING OUT OF HIS OFFICE, BITSIOS SAID THAT THERE WERE "RUMORS GOING AROUND IN BRUSSELS" THAT THE US HAD SUGGESTED TO CERTAIN EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS THAT THEY "GO SLOW" WITH RESPECT TO GREECE'S APPLICATION TO JOIN THE EEC. I EXPRESSED DISBELIEF AND SPECULATED THAT SOMEBODY WAS TRYING TO SOW BAD WILL BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND ATHENS. BITSIOS SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY "REFUSED TO BELIEVE" THAT SUCH RUMORS WERE TRUE BUT THAT HE THOUGHT I SHOULD LET THE SECRETARY KNOW THAT THEY WERE CIRCULATING IN BRUSSELS. (COMMENT: I BELIEVE SOME USG REACTION ON THIS POINT WOULD BE DESIRABLE, WHICH I COULD PASS TO BITSIOS THE NEXT TIME I SEE HIM).

13. BITSIOS SAID THAT HE AND CARAMANLIS WERE LEAVING EARLY WEDNESDAY MORNING (JUNE 4) FOR THEIR OFFICIAL VISIT TO BELGRADE AND THAT HE EXPECTED TO BE BACK IN HIS OFFICE IN ATHENS SOMETIME FRIDAY. WE AGREED TO GET IN TOUCH AGAIN FOLLOWING HIS RETURN. I THANKED HIM, ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY, FOR THE PROMPT READ-OUT HE HAD GIVEN ME ON THE CARAMANLIS-DEMIREL MEETING.
KUBISCH UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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